

Hanson-Cramer House
At end of Sea Street
Rockport
Knox County
Maine

HABS No. ME-78

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-78

HANSON-CRAMER HOUSE

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Address: At end of Sea Street, Rockport, Knox County,
~~Rhode Island.~~ *Maine*

Present Owner
and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose C. Cramer.

Present Use: Residence.

Brief Statement
of Significance: Built for and used by Ferdinand Hanson, proprietor of local ironworks that furnished metal work for ships built locally for Carlton-Norwood Company, shipbuilders and operators. House said to have been designed and built by John Pascal, master shipwright of Carlton-Norwood Company. Two other small houses in Rockport have identical details.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Land where house originally stood, before being moved is said to have been owned by Harkness family as far back as 1640's. Pre-1854, Robert Harkness; 1854, Ferdinand Hanson; 1901, Mary C. Hanson; 1925, Mary C. Barrett; 1937, W. P. Barrett; 1940, Ethel Pearse and R. Barrett; 1947, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Cramer. Property on Rockport Harbor to which house was moved: see above re Harkness family. 1769, John Harkness, first First-Selectman of Camden (including Village of Rockport), then Robert Harkness, eventually George E. and A. F. Harkness who, in 1947, sold land to Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Cramer.

2. Date of erection: Said to have been 1854.

3. Architect, builder, etc.: John Pascal (see above)

4. Notes on alterations and additions: Alterations in 1948 included moving in three sections on trailers about 1/2 mile to present location; before being moved in 1948, house stood on south side of Pascal's Avenue, Rockport; removal of three single flue chimneys, one in middle of each building unit, and construction of four larger chimneys of old brick, with caps of local 1850 design, placed at four gable ends; two old mantels reused and one new added; interior partitions relocated as well as stairways; new dormers added, the design for them having been taken from Greek Revival dormers on the Henry Carlton House, Union Street, Rockport.

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5. Important old views: The present owners have a large number of photographs of the original building before its removal to its present site, of the three parts of the building in the process of being moved and of the building in its final location.

6. Sources of information: Local informants who knew Ferdinand Hanson and from people who had lived in the building. Ownership from 1854 has been traced by the present owners' attorneys in determining that title to the property was clear. Property ownership is recorded in the Register of Deeds for Knox County.

B. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: The property on Rockport Harbor, to which the house was moved, was purchased from the Harkness family, direct descendants from the Harknesses who had purchased it, it is said, from the "Committee of 10," an offshoot of the Plymouth Company, England. It is hoped to search the title further later.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Greek Revival style, in wood. Well designed as to scale and detail. Good entablature with dentils. Doric pilasters at eight corners.

2. Condition of fabric: Extensively remodelled, excellent condition. Clapboards now and originally painted medium corn yellow. Balance of woodwork, entablature, door and window trim, doors, sash, pilasters, columns, water table, white.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: 76'-6" x 25'-4"; one-and-a-half stories; central block with wings to both sides; rectangular layout.

2. Foundations: Footings and walls, fieldstone; sills, smooth surfaced granite.

3. Wall construction: 8" wood frame, 2" x 6" studs, wood sheathing and clapboards, wood plank lath, lime plaster.

4. Porches, stoops: Landing platform and steps at five exterior doors, granite. Front entrance porch has two free-standing Ionic fluted columns supporting simplified frieze and cornice.

5. Chimneys: Originally three, one brick thick with single plastered flue; each chimney located in center of wings and of center portion of building. Central main chimney supported on large base in cellar containing rain water cistern. Four new chimneys of old brick built at gable ends.

6. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: West main entrance, solid door with four-light side lights on each side; five-light rectangular fanlight; one door in each wing, with side lights, solid doors on west side, half-glazed on east.

b. Windows and shutters: Cellar sash, one frame, four-light; ground floor, double hung, six over six light. Louvred wood shutters.

7. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Ridge roof, gabled ends, 45° pitch, hand-split cedar shingles.

b. Cornice: Late Georgian molded cornice with dentils and plain fireze.

c. Dormers: Dormers new, slightly modified copies of Green Revival dormers on Henry Carlton house, Union Street, Rockport.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: First floor: central portion of building, main entrance hall with library, toilet and stair hall at south; at north, kitchen, coat closet, china room with four corner cupboards, stair to cellar, second stair to second floor. South wing, living room; north wing, dining room with 1760 hand-painted scenic wall-paper. Second floor; four bedrooms, three baths, storeroom, two stair halls. From about 1880 to 1947, the house was occupied by two families.

2. Stairways: From ground to second floors, of no interest.

3. Flooring: Original wood random width plank, 6" to 10" pine, spruce, hemlock.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Lime plaster. Entrance hall covered with fabric; three bedrooms papered; balance of walls, painted; ceilings all painted.

5. Doorways and doors: Four-paneled, smaller panels at bottom; sinkages on one side, raised fields on other.

6. Trim: Wood wainscots and chair rails. Generally 4"-5" wood trim at doors and windows; some doors and windows have wood crown molds.

7. Hardware: Originally, white china knobs; changed to brass when building was restored. Most doors furnished with old brass rimlocks. Generally two pair of original butts per door.

8. Lighting: House was rewired when remodelled. Two ceiling lanterns in entrance hall; one in main stair hall.

9. Heating: Originally by fireplaces and kitchen ranges, with through-floor grilles for passage of heat. Replaced with circulated warm air in ducts.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Originally 50' south of south side of Pascal's Avenue and parallel to it, in Rockport village. Moved by motor trailer in 1948 one half mile south to site on west side of Rockport Harbor, 40' west of bluff on water front and parallel to north-south axis of harbor.

2. Outbuildings: Caretaker's 12-room cottage, two two-car garages, one office building, one garden house, one well house, one potting shed.

3. Landscaping: None at original location. At new location, dense woods cleared for house site, driveways, lawns, large vegetable gardens, shrubbery, etc.

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